



# State Emergency Operations Officer

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Emergency Management Division  
Washington Military Department

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## Background

Since increasing its capabilities in November 1995, the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division, has provided 24-hour coverage for alert, warning, resource coordination, and notification of emergency events affecting the state of Washington. State Emergency Operations Officers routinely coordinate emergency response activities with local jurisdictions, as well as state and federal agencies to save lives, and protect property, the economy, and the environment.

## Role and Purpose

The State Emergency Operations Officer is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the State Alert & Warning Center. State Emergency Operations Officers staff the Alert & Warning Center on a 12-hour rotating shift schedule, 24-hours per day, and seven-days per week. They are the initial contact for state assistance from local jurisdictions, private industry, state agencies, and other organizations. Additionally, the State Emergency Operations Officer is the initial point of contact for federal agencies responding to an emergency or disaster situation occurring in Washington.

State Emergency Operations Officers coordinate response activities for emergencies that are the result of natural, technological, or human-caused hazards. They routinely make notifications of and coordinate response activities for hazardous material, search and rescue, and wildland fire fighting incidents, as well as for a wide variety of other emergency situations. They issue mission numbers to local authorized officials for approved missions or other emergency activities. The mission number provides state liability coverage and reimbursement for certain expenses of registered emergency workers involved in emergency response or training activities. [WAC 118-04-240]

Additionally, State Emergency Operations Officers are prepared to implement contingency plans and provide warning and emergency notification to local, state, and federal agencies in the event of earthquakes, volcanic activity, tsunamis, flood, or severe weather, and incidents involving the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program, Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant, and the U.S. Department of Energy - Richland; as well as many other emergency conditions that potentially could impact Washington State.

State Emergency Operations Officers generally follow predetermined operational procedures for emergency and disaster situations. However, if necessary, they have the authority to initiate needed immediate response or other necessary activities related to unique incidents or those that are time sensitive. They have the ability to dispatch emergency management liaison officers to emergencies or disasters to provide on-site assistance and act as a direct link between the state EOC and local EOCs or Incident Commanders.

## Contact

For additional information, please contact Ken Parrish, Emergency Operations Manager, at (253) 512-7022, or e-mail [k.parrish@emd.wa.gov](mailto:k.parrish@emd.wa.gov).